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ABSTRACT

The relevance of career education in meeting the needs of the disadvantaged is explored; the important components of a career education are presented; and suggestions are made for state planning. Career education is seen as the effort to help students integrate work oriented values into their lives and providing them with the experiences and opportunities they need to successfully pursue their continuing job interests. The essential components that should be included in a comprehensive career education system are: (1) design a comprehensive system of career ladder and lattices for occupational education; (2) design new systems and arrangements for interagency coordination; (3) redesign instructional programs at all educational levels to reflect career education objectives; (4) redesign counseling and guidance activities at all educational levels to reflect career education objectives; and (5) design advanced planning and evaluation systems. Before a comprehensive career education plan can be developed, several essential preplanning steps must be taken; these are (1) establish an "interactive network" between local college vocational education directors and job placement officers; (2) select occupation areas for development of career ladders and lattices; (3) establish advisory committees on local, regional, and state levels; and (4) develop and demonstrate a basic career education plan. Experience shows that six months to one year may be needed to complete statewide preplanning for career education. (DE)

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CAREER EDUCATION:

CONCEPTS, COMPONENTS, AND PLANNING

A report of the
National Dissemination Project
for the Community Colleges

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

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CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGE
INFORMATION

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Education
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FOREWORD

This report was prepared by the National Dissemination Project to suggest ways in which community college systems might better serve the needs of minority and disadvantaged students through planning.

The National Dissemination Project is an outgrowth of ten earlier Office of Economic Opportunity projects undertaken by state community college agencies to develop comprehensive planning capacities to serve the disadvantaged and to provide institutional support in program development. It has become obvious from the high drop out rate alone, which often approaches 90 percent for disadvantaged students compared with a 30 percent attrition rate for other students, that community colleges are not successfully meeting the educational and career needs of disadvantaged students. New approaches and new planning efforts are a critical need.

The lessons learned in the OEO planning projects as well as in other innovative programs and projects across the nation have been assessed by the National Dissemination Project. In total, visits have been made to over 100 community colleges in 16 states, and contacts established with state directors and concerned groups and agencies.

In this report, the relevance of career education in meeting the needs of the disadvantaged is explored, the important components of a career education system presented, and

suggestions made for state planning. A separate report has been prepared on a model for state career education planning.

It is hoped that this report will serve as an introduction and a focus for concern. The National Dissemination Project will continue to provide resource information between now and August 1, 1973, in helping individuals, colleges, and systems better serve minority and disadvantaged students. This will be done by providing information, contacts, and assistance in planning for change. For further information contact:

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EXPLORING THE CONCEPTS

The Major Problems: In spite of the very real accomplishments of schools in this country, serious weaknesses remain. A major conclusion of this study is that the present educational system is not successfully bridging the gap between the world of school and the world of work. The reasons for this failure include misunderstanding of career education concepts, a lack of planning, and an academic orientation which de-emphasizes career needs.

Occupational/vocational education programs must share in the blame. In many cases they serve to narrow a student's job options by emphasizing skills for a specific job, rather than a career field; and they lock students into dead-end training programs, rather than providing advancement possibilities within a chosen field.

Occupational programs have continued to rely far too heavily on a mix of job training and traditional academic courses, justified as educating the "whole man". Little attention has been given to making academic curriculum more relevant to the student's career interests. The result is a high drop-out rate caused by an inability or unwillingness to absorb traditional academic material in the pursuit of job training.

The basic directional change needed at the present time is the insertion of successful preparation for work as a

major objective of education at every level and in every kind of setting. In terms of educational purposes, this means emphasizing education as preparation for making a living. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, reports that "nearly 25 million students per year leave the formal education system without adequate preparation for a career."* It is time that we recognize that preparation for making a living is as important an educational goal as preparation for living.

Toward a Remedy: Career education as a means for remedying many of the deficiencies of our outdated educational system has been widely discussed and debated in the past several years. But it is critical that educators and the community at large be assured that career education is not, or should not be, another educational fad. We are at the point now where enough development of the concepts and broad demonstration of components has been completed so that planning for implementation can begin. We will touch on this shortly.

Very briefly, career education may be defined as the total effort of public education aimed at helping students integrate work oriented values into their lives and providing them with the experiences and opportunities they need to successfully pursue their continuing job interests.

The following is an example of a good inter-agency definition of career education, recently agreed upon in the State of Washington by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board

*Career Education, A Department of Health, Education, and Welfare report. #D06-OE-72-39. 1972

for Community College Education, and the Coordinating Council for Occupational Education:

"Career Education is a concept that provides all students of all ages the benefits of an interdisciplinary approach to education. Properly conceived and implemented it will enable students at all educational levels to become aware, develop attitudes, select, prepare and pursue a career plan compatible with their abilities and aspirations. Further, it enables students to relate in-school and out-of-school experiences to individual goals. Career education, to be effective, demand a cooperative effort among many segments of society--the community, parents, students and educators."

Important Developments in Career Education: Remedial manpower programs for the disadvantaged began the federal movement toward career education in the early 1960's. The Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) of 1962 recognized the need for retraining adults as technological and economic change threatened their existing means of livelihood. Several components of the Economic Opportunity Act, passed in the same year, were also remedial in nature, designed to provide work attitudes and job skills to students within the educational system.

In 1963, the Vocational Education Act resulted in a significant philosophical shift toward career education. Besides providing new developmental funds, the act emphasized the employment needs of various groups within the labor force rather than the skill needs of the labor market.

The 1968 amendment to the Vocational Education Act recommended a "unified system of vocational education", with key components related to career needs. These recommendations included:

1. Beginning occupational preparation in the elementary school years by providing a realistic picture of the world of work.
2. Emphasizing economic orientation and occupational preparation in junior high school with a study of the economic and industrial system by which goods and services are produced and distributed.
3. Providing all students in high school who are outside the college preparatory curriculum with entry-level job skills.
4. Utilizing extra-classroom learning experiences, such as cooperative work-study programs, in post-secondary vocational education.
5. Providing placement and follow-up services for students to help build a bridge between school and work.

As U.S. Commissioner of Education since 1970, Dr. Sydney P. Marland has been responsible for much of the recent development in career education. One of the most significant Office of

Education projects initiated under Dr. Marland's direction is a National Center for Occupational Education (Raleigh, North Carolina) study entitled. "Assessing, Documenting and Spreading Exemplary Programs of Career Education." Forty-one programs have been visited around the country, none of which could be described as comprehensive career education programs on their own. The study should, however, lead to a better understanding of components and planning steps needed for national development.

The U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity has also been concerned with career education planning. In 1970 it funded ten state community college agencies to initiate planning efforts for the disadvantaged, with a major emphasis to be upon career education.

The results of these developments have been a clarification of career education concepts, components, and planning needs. If the 1960's was a time of study, the 1970's will be a time of planning for implementation.

COMPONENTS OF A CAREER EDUCATION MODEL

Career education may be viewed as a program which moves the student through three phases of development.

1. The student becomes familiar with the values of work-oriented society. The aim is not to impose any particular set of work values on the student, but to insure that he or she is made aware of various forms of work and their interrelationships.
2. The student integrates work values with his or her personal value system. This is a phase of exploration and personal decision-making relating to a chosen field of work.
3. The student actualizes his or her work values through occupational preparation and job placement.

Following are the essential components which need be included in a comprehensive career education system, as formulated by the National Dissemination Project and based on national experiences and studies over the past several years.

Design a comprehensive system of career ladder and lattices for occupational education.

- a. Design "integrated" curricula for flexible deployment of students between occupational training programs.
- b. Re-structure advisory councils to reflect career,

rather than industry and occupation, interests.

c. Mobilize community resources to meet career identification, work experience, placement and career-success objectives.

d. Organize placement and follow-up activities to fully utilize all systems and resources in (a) and (b).

Design new systems and arrangements for inter-agency coordination.

a. Establish vertical and horizontal linkages between institutions and agencies to avoid duplication of programs, and to facilitate acceptance of credit and supplementary course work.

b. Develop student referral systems from secondary to post-secondary levels, and among institutions.

c. Extend open-entry/open-exit arrangements between institutions and educational programs within institutions.

d. Devise an effective recruitment process from secondary, private schools and skill training centers, to post-secondary institutions.

e. Coordinate high-school with post-secondary skills training, to assist advance placement from secondary levels.

Redesign instructional programs at all educational levels to reflect career education objectives.

a. Establish in-service as well as pre-service training for faculty and administrators to enhance students' educational success.

- b. Develop career awareness, exploration and preparation programs from elementary to post-secondary levels to help students identify career goal.
- c. Develop individualized instructional paths to ensure flexibility and mobility to students by combining work/study experience.
- d. Forecast local, regional and statewide manpower needs to facilitate phasing out or upgrading of courses.
- e. Coordinate state, regional and local industry to provide credit for work experience.
- f. Develop and implement related career education curriculum materials, to reflect career planning paths from grades K through 16 and beyond.
- g. Implement new teaching methods and ideas to promote individualized, continuous-progress learning.

Redesign counseling and guidance activities at all educational levels to reflect career education objectives.

- a. Develop career choice concepts to provide adequate assistance to individuals in identifying career goals.
- b. Establish a proficiency assessment process to evaluate students' needs rather than using the process to screen students.
- c. Develop efficient assessment systems and procedures to adequately match individuals to related career choices (Job Matching System).

- d. Stress job development, placement, and follow-up activities to provide continuing help to students with employment opportunities, and to gain feedback from placement efforts in modifying and improving programs.
- e. Develop a Computerized Information System to provide information on job possibilities, career options, and training objectives for students and agencies.
- f. Develop suitable criteria for determining qualifications of career guidance personnel, and establish training programs based on criteria.
- g. Develop guidance-related classroom activities to supplement and enrich regular pre-vocational or vocational curricula.

Design advanced planning and evaluation systems.

- a. Design long-range (6-10 years) forecasting models with implications for development of career education programs.
- b. Develop skill-based clustering techniques for occupational programs to allow more student mobility.
- c. Establish recruitment and multi-service centers to provide career services to the disadvantaged community.
- d. Design a systems approach to job development, combining placement, forecasting of training needs and program planning. Involve local, regional, and state agencies in the promotion of new vocations and careers in industry.

PRE-PLANNING A CAREER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Career education is a comprehensive, integrated, inter-divisional approach to the educational process. Therefore, while various components may be developed in one institution or at one level, a complete system of career education will require coordinated state planning.

Little is likely to happen without the commitment and aggressive leadership of state agencies, including secondary and post-secondary departments of education and the coordinating agency for vocational programs.

As of this date, no state has developed or committed itself to a comprehensive career education plan. Before this can occur, several essential pre-planning steps must be initiated. Following is a brief outline of suggested pre-planning steps.

1. Establish an "interactive network" between local college vocational education directors and job placement officers. Improved and on-going communication channels are necessary between vocational education directors and job placement officers to achieve full participation in the planning and organization of local career education programs. If work and study are to be mixed throughout an individual's lifetime, job placement will play a key role in the educational system; and if career education is to

attain its ultimate goals, feedback on job placement will be needed to modify and improve programs.

2. Select occupation areas for development of career ladders and lattices. Designing career education ladders and lattices, by campus and region, can be accomplished by researching voc-ed curricula, and restructuring the clusters with the coordination of curriculum committees after analyzing possible and feasible career education models.
3. Establish advisory committees on local, regional, and state levels. These committees should involve representatives from major occupational groupings in business and industry, on a continuing basis. Advisory committees need to identify and revise career groupings based on changes in the job market.
4. Develop and demonstrate a basic career education plan. When developing such a plan, all inputs previously mentioned need to be taken into consideration and integrated into a total concept. A plan for career education curricula structures for example, might include integration of vocational education programs, addition of parallel and supplementary courses, and provision of specialized career education services. It is understood that such a plan is to serve all student groups, should they be disadvantaged, ethnic minorities, handicapped, or non-minorities.

BEYOND PRE-PLANNING

If all pre-planning steps are successfully completed, with participation at local, regional, and statewide levels, full-scale planning for career education can begin.

Experience indicates that six months to one year may be needed to complete statewide pre-planning for career education. At the end of this period, one would have a Basic Career Education Plan--and all the ingredients needed to make it work.

Career education planning is discussed in a separate report, and will not be pursued in detail here. However, any realistic plan would allow two years or more for research, testing, and demonstration of all aspects of a Basic Plan; the formulation of a final plan, and its implementation throughout a system, could take another two or more years.

In other words, career education as a fully operational system of education is really not expected to be universal until 1980 and beyond. Now is the time to do the groundwork that will make universal career education a reality by 1980.